



# Open House

## Proposed Samish Water Management Rule

from Ecology's Water Resources Program

### Proposed Samish Water Management Rule

#### OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, Dec. 9  
5 to 8 p.m.

Burlington Senior  
Community Center  
1011 Greenleaf Ave.  
Burlington, Wash.

Suggestions on the  
features of the  
proposed rule may  
be sent to:

Geoff Tallent  
Department of  
Ecology, Northwest  
Regional Office  
3190 – 160<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE  
Bellevue, Wash.  
98008-5452

phone:  
(425) 649-4318

email:  
[samish@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:samish@ecy.wa.gov)

Ecology is developing a proposed water management rule for the Samish River basin to help determine how water in the basin could be allocated for future uses for people while maintaining enough water to protect important fish species.

**Suggestions on the features and issues of the proposed water management rule may be sent to Geoff Tallent, Department of Ecology, Northwest Regional Office, 3190 – 160<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Bellevue, Wash. 98008-5452.**

### Background

In 2001, Ecology adopted a rule in the Lower and Upper Skagit (WRIA 3 and 4), Chapter 173-503 WAC. The rule excluded the Samish River basin and the islands within the two WRIs. Ecology is now proposing to amend the rule to include a new section on the Samish River basin. The proposed amendment would also include tributaries to the Samish River such as Friday Creek.

The locally-led Samish Watershed Planning Unit Steering Committee made significant progress towards a water management plan, but did not make a recommendation on setting instream flow levels for the basin. As a result, instream flow work is being conducted by Ecology in consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Tribes. Ecology is building on information developed by the Samish Watershed Planning Unit Steering Committee in developing its proposed rule amendment.

### Elements of the proposed water management rule

Ecology is looking at many factors that affect instream flows. The new proposed rule amendment will help determine how water in the Samish River basin ought to be allocated for future uses. Elements of the proposed rule amendment include:

- Protecting fish, wildlife, water quality, recreation and aesthetics in the watershed while also providing water for future human uses.
- Setting instream flow levels for the rivers and creeks.
- Protecting water levels for lakes and ponds in the watershed.
- Reserving a certain amount of ground water for future home and small business use that won't need a new water right permit.
- Setting aside sufficient water for grazing livestock that in some cases will not need a water right permit.
- Creating stricter standards for issuing new water rights in the basin.

The proposed Samish water management rule will **not** affect:

- Existing or "senior" water rights.
- Existing permit-exempt wells.
- People currently supplied by municipal or community water systems.

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## Open house information

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The public is invited to ask questions and make suggestions on the concepts and issues the proposed water management rule is seeking to address.

The open house will be held from 5 to 8 p.m., with a presentation at 7 p.m. on Thursday, December 9, at the Burlington Senior Community Center, 1011 Greenleaf Avenue, Burlington, Wash.

Suggestions on the features and issues for consideration in the proposed Samish water management rule may be sent to Geoff Tallent, Department of Ecology, Northwest Regional Office, 3190 – 160<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Bellevue, Wash., 98008-5452; phone: (425) 649-4318 (e-mail: [samish@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:samish@ecy.wa.gov)). You can visit Ecology's Web site at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/instream-flows/isfhtm.html>

If you would like additional information on the open house, please call Judy Beitel at Ecology, (360) 407-6878 (email: [jbei461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:jbei461@ecy.wa.gov)).